



Independent Electoral Commission: www.elections.org.za/

How to contest municipal elections

This document provides guidelines to independent and party candidates wishing to contest municipal elections.

This document does not replace or obviate the legal requirements that must be met by candidates.

Municipal councils

The term of municipal councils is 5 years.

There are 3 types of Municipal Councils in South Africa:

- **Category A:** Metropolitan Councils;
- **Category B:** Local Councils (LC); and
- **Category C:** District Councils (DC) (have executive and legislative powers in areas that include local municipalities)

Types of municipal elections

Elections are contested in every municipality but the type of election is determined by the category of that municipality.

For metropolitan municipalities, there are 2 types of elections in each ward:

- Metropolitan council ward, and
- Metropolitan proportional representation.

In all local municipalities other than metropolitan municipalities, there are 3 types of elections in each ward:

- Local council ward;
- Local council proportional representation; and
- District council proportional representation.

Contesting municipal elections

Independent and **party ward candidates** can contest:

- a metropolitan council ward
or
- a local council ward.

Registered **parties** can contest:

- the metropolitan council proportional representation elections
or
- the local council and district council proportional representation elections.

Membership of Municipal Councils

Every citizen who is qualified to vote for a municipal council is eligible to stand and to be elected as a member of that council, unless that person:

- is in the service of that municipality and receives remuneration from that municipality and has not been exempted from disqualification in terms of national legislation;
- is appointed by, or is in the service of the state in another sphere and receives remuneration for that appointment and has been disqualified from membership of a Municipal Council in terms of national legislation;
- is disqualified from voting for the National Assembly;
- has been declared an unrehabilitated insolvent;
- has been declared to be of unsound mind by a court of the Republic;
- is convicted of an offence and sentenced to more than twelve 12 months imprisonment without the option of a fine either in the Republic , or outside of the Republic if the conduct constituting the offence would have been an offence in the Republic and a period of 5 years has not elapsed since the sentence was completed;
- is a member of the National Assembly, a delegate to the National Council of Provinces or a member of the provincial legislature, unless that person is a member of the municipal council representing local government in the National Council; or
- is a member of another Municipal Council other than a Municipal Council representing that Council in a Municipal Council of a different category.

Deadlines

Once the election date has been proclaimed, the Electoral Commission (IEC) publishes an [election timetable](#) with deadlines that candidates and parties must meet.

Requirements for Nomination as a Ward Candidate

Ward elections in either a metropolitan or local municipality may be contested by an independent or party ward candidate who is eligible to stand as a councillor.

The candidate must be registered as a voter on that municipal segment of the voters' roll.

To be nominated as an independent ward candidate, you must submit:

1. A **nomination form** signed by the nominator (download [Appendix 6: Nomination of Independent Ward Candidate \(PDF\)](#));
2. A prescribed **acceptance of nomination form** signed by the Ward Candidate which includes an Undertaking to be bound by the Code of Conduct and a Declaration that a candidate is not disqualified from standing (download [Appendix 7: Nomination of ward candidate representing a party \(PDF\)](#));
3. A prescribed form with **signatures of at least 50 voters** whose names appear on the voters' roll of any of the voting districts in the ward in which the independent candidate is standing (download [Appendix 8: Signatures of voters concerning the nomination of an independent ward candidate \(PDF\)](#));
4. A copy of the page of the **candidate's ID book** on which the candidate's photo, name and ID number appear;
5. The election deposit paid by **bank guaranteed cheque** made out to the Electoral Commission; and
6. An **A5 colour photo** (head and shoulders) of the independent ward candidate as first choice but black and white will not be rejected.

To nominate party ward candidates, your party must submit:

1. A **nomination form** signed by an Authorised Party Representative (download [Appendix 7: Nomination of ward candidate representing a party \(PDF\)](#));
2. A prescribed **acceptance of nomination form** signed by each ward candidate which includes an Undertaking to be bound by the Code of Conduct and a Declaration that a candidate are not disqualified from standing (download [Appendix 9: Acceptance of nomination by a ward candidate \(PDF\)](#));
3. A copy of the page of the **candidate's ID book** on which the candidate's photo, name and ID number appear;
4. The election deposit paid by **bank guaranteed cheque** made out to The Electoral Commission.

The **deadline** for the submission of these documents is published in the [election timetable](#) (only available after the election date has been proclaimed).

Requirements for Nomination as a Proportional Representation Councillor

Only political parties can submit candidate lists for proportional representation elections for either metropolitan municipalities **OR** local and district municipalities.

All candidates submitted for nomination must meet the requirements to stand as a councillor.

To nominate party list councillors, your party must submit:

1. Notice of its intention to contest an election signed by an authorised party representative which includes an undertaking to be bound by the Code of Conduct and a declaration that candidates are not disqualified from standing (download [Appendix 2: Notice of intention to contest an election \(PDF\)](#));
2. A party list in a fixed order of preference (download [Appendix 3: Party list of candidates \(PDF\)](#));
3. A prescribed acceptance of nomination form signed by each party candidate (download [Appendix 4: Acceptance of nomination by candidate on party list \(PDF\)](#));
4. A copy of the page of each candidate's identity document (ID) on which the candidate's photo, name and ID number appear.

The deadline for the submission of these documents is published in the [election timetable](#) (only available after the election date has been proclaimed).

PLEASE NOTE:

The Duly Authorised Party Representative to nominate candidates must furnish proof signed by the person registered with the Electoral Commission as party national signatory that he or she is authorised to nominate candidates.

District Electoral Officers

District Electoral Officers (DEOs) have been appointed for each District Council to administer **party candidate nomination lists** for the **District Council Proportional Representation** elections. Download [DEO contact details](#) (PDF - 25 KB) with addresses and office numbers.

Election Deposits

The election deposits to be paid by **bank guaranteed cheque** made out to **The Electoral Commission** are:

- **R4,000** in respect of an election in a metropolitan municipality, which amount covers all ward and proportional representation elections in that metropolitan council;
- **R2,500** for a local council election, which amount covers all ward and proportional representation elections in that local council;
- **R1,500** for a local council without wards and in a district council election, which covers all ward and proportional representation elections in that local or district council; and
- **R1,000** per ward election in respect of an independent ward candidate and for a ward candidate nominated by a party who is not contesting an election of a relevant municipal council by way of a party list.

Central Payment

Central payment (download [Appendix 24: Central payments of deposits \(PDF\)](#)) can only be made at our [national office](#) in Centurion, **not** at provincial or municipal offices.

For more information, please [contact our national office](#).

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